

WVBESLPA'S CONSUMER GUIDE

What is the purpose of the West Virginia Board of Examiners for Speech-Language Pathology and Audiology (WVBESLPA)?

WV Code §30-32.1 - "The practice of speech-language pathology and audiology is a privilege granted to qualified persons and that, in order to safeguard the public health, safety and welfare, protect the public from being misled by incompetent, unscrupulous and unauthorized persons, and protect the public from unprofessional conduct by qualified speech-language pathologists and audiologists, it is necessary to provide regulatory authority over persons offering speech-language pathology and audiology services." The intent of the licensure law is to:

1. Require educational training and licensure of any person who engages in the practice of speech-language pathology and/or audiology.
2. Require continuing education hours every year that relate directly to the professional growth and development of the speech-language pathologist and/or audiologist.
3. Prohibit the unauthorized and unqualified practice of speech-language pathology and/or audiology, and
4. Prohibit the unprofessional conduct of persons licensed to practice speech-language pathology and/or audiology.

To protect consumers of West Virginia and residents of applicable surrounding states, a process has been provided for complaints filed against persons violating WVBESLPA's licensure law.

Who Can File a Complaint?

A complaint can be filed by any person, firm, corporation, member of the Board, or public officer who believes an individual has acted illegally, irresponsibly or unprofessionally in providing care. The most effective complaints are those that contain firsthand, verifiable information. Because the Board cannot act on anonymous complaints, all complaints must be in writing.

How Do I File a Complaint?

Complaints must be submitted in writing and signed before the process can begin. The Board has provided a form for this purpose but a complaint may be filed in any written form. In addition to describing the alleged violation which prompted the complaint, the complaint should contain the following:

1. The name and address of the speech-language pathologist, audiologist, provisional licensee or assistant against whom the complaint is lodged;
2. The date(s) of care;

3. The name of any health care institution or health care provider in which the patient was an inpatient or outpatient after or during the alleged incident(s)
4. Any other information requested by the WVBESLPA.

What Other Documentation Does WVBESLPA Require to Process a Complaint?

To assist the process of a complaint, the following form is available for your convenience at wvspeechandaudiology.com:

Complaint Form – This form can help structure your complaint, although a written letter describing the same information is acceptable. The written complaint must be signed by the person filing the complaint.

How are Complaints Processed?

Once a complaint has been received, a letter is mailed to the complainant confirming receipt of their complaint and a case number is assigned. The Board shall send a copy of the complaint, including any supporting documentation, by certified mail to the licensee or applicant in question for his or her written comment, and he or she shall submit a written response to the Board within thirty (30) days of the date of such correspondence, or waive the right to do so. Upon receipt of a licensee's or applicant's comments in response to a complaint, the Board shall promptly send a copy of the same, including any supporting documentation, to the complainant.

After receipt and review of a complaint, unless the complaint is determined to fall outside the jurisdiction of the Board, the Board shall conduct any reasonable inquiry or investigation it considers necessary to determine the truth and validity of the allegations in the complaint.

The outcomes can vary, but are not limited to: closing the file with no action from the Board, imposing fines, license suspension, reprimand issuance, or revocation of licensure.

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